



POLITICAL SCIENCE 220

INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Fall 2024

Class meeting time and location: Mon/Wed, 2:00-3:30PM, HENN-Floor 1-Room 202

Instructor

Dr. Sally Sharif

Office: BUCH C304A

Office Hours: Mon 10AM-12PM

Email: sshari06@mail.ubc.ca

Note: Students should contact the teaching assistants for any course-related inquiries and request. They should also send letters of accommodation to the teaching assistant that leads their discussion section.

Teaching Assistants

Saskia Tholen

Email: tholens@mail.ubc.ca

Office House: After class on Monday

Joshua Hill

Email: jphill@student.ubc.ca

Office Hours: After class on Wednesday

Course Description

This course delves into key themes and concepts in comparative politics, focusing on the characteristics of different countries, including their governmental institutions, development patterns, cultures, societies, and instances of violence. Students will develop critical thinking skills to better understand global political dynamics and will acquire in-depth knowledge of specific countries. They will explore when and how general political concepts and structures apply across different contexts, and when they do not. The course also encourages students to question conventional country categorizations and to examine the impact of an ever-changing global landscape.

Course Learning Objectives

- Learn some of methodologies employed in comparative politics
- Compare different types of state structures and conditions and explain how those might affect the politics of countries generally and in specific case study examples.
- Engage different arguments about the impact of culture, ethnicity, ideology, and societal structures on political processes within countries, both generally and in application to specific cases.
- Identify different types of regime structures, as well as the different perspectives regarding how different regime structures obtain and maintain power.
- Apply real world events to theoretical concepts

Course Format

The format of the course will be two class sessions per week with compulsory attendance in person. The course also has six discussion sessions led by the teaching assistants. Discussion sessions will be held on weeks with stars (see the course outline below).

POLI_V 220-A_L1A	24	Saskia Tholen	HENN-Floor 2-Room 302 Mon 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. 2024-09-03 - 2024-12-02
POLI_V 220-A_L1B	15	Joshua Hill	HENN-Floor 2-Room 302 Wed 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. 2024-09-04 - 2024-12-04
POLI_V 220-A_L1C	18	Saskia Tholen	HENN-Floor 2-Room 301 Tue 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. 2024-09-03 - 2024-12-03
POLI_V 220-A_L1D	8	Joshua Hill	HENN-Floor 2-Room 301 Thu 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. 2024-09-05 - 2024-12-05
POLI_V 220-A_L1E	22	Joshua Hill	BUCH-Floor 3-Room B306 Mon 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. 2024-09-03 - 2024-12-02
POLI_V 220-A_L1F	14	Saskia Tholen	BUCH-Floor 3-Room D301 Tue 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. 2024-09-03 - 2024-12-03

Required Course Texts

- O'Neil, Patrick H. 2023. *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. Eighth Edition, W.W. Norton and Company. [Seventh edition will work too if you do not find the eighth]
- All other materials will be available on Canvas.

Course Assignments, Due Dates and Grading

Students are responsible for material covered in class discussions as well as in the assigned readings. Regular attendance in class is expected. Grades will be determined on the basis of the following:

Weekly tests (40%)

This course tests knowledge of the readings and attention to the lecture through weekly multiple-choice tests during the lecture via Canvas. Students should have access to a computer or phone during class to do the test.

Midterm exam (30%)

The midterm exam is a closed-book exam based on class lectures, readings, and the audio-visual material on the syllabus. I give a list of questions to the teaching assistants every week, which they discuss during the discussion sessions. The questions on the midterm exam will be from these questions. Student answers should reflect their understanding of the material on the syllabus (not answers provided by Google or ChatGPT).

Final exam (30%)

The final exam is a closed-book exam based on class lectures, readings, and the audio-visual material on the syllabus covered after the midterm exam. The teaching assistants will discuss questions on the final exam during the discussion sessions. Student answers should reflect their understanding of the material on the syllabus.

Extra credit

I believe in continuous assessment and grade students based on their progress throughout the semester. Since mastering the field requires sustained effort rather than last-minute assignments, I do not offer extra credit.

Regrading Policy

Regrading of marked work by the teaching assistant will only take place if accompanied by a one-page memo indicating in detail the grounds for regrading; students should note that a regrading of a paper or exam may result in the lowering of grade upon further review. If this procedure does not resolve the matter, it may be appealed to the professor, who, again, may raise or lower the grade upon further review.

Course Outline and Readings

Week 1 Introduction

September 4

Introduction to the syllabus: no reading required


Week 2 Comparative Politics: Definitions and Methodology

September 9

 O'Neil, 2-24

 Watch: Divided Island: How Haiti and the DR Became Two Worlds.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4WvKeYuwifc>. (15:51 mins)


September 11

 Posner, Daniel. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Differences: Why are Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi?" *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545.

Week 3 The State


September 16

 O'Neil, 30-44

 Watch: How the US failed to rebuild Afghanistan.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XKVDXbIpW9Q>. (06.08 mins)

September 18

 O'Neil, 45-60

 Sexton, Renard, and Christoph Zürcher. 2023. "Aid, Attitudes, and Insurgency: Evidence from Development Projects in Northern Afghanistan." *American Journal of Political Science* 68(3): 1168-1182.

Week 4* Nations and Society

September 23



O'Neil, 62-77



Watch: How This Border Transformed a Subcontinent: India & Pakistan.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5Ps1TZXAN8&list=PLJ8cMiYb3G5czofUrrizDiyC_yNLOe_CF&index=83&t=258s.

September 25



O'Neil, 78-98



Watch: China is Erasing its Border with Hong Kong.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MQyxG4vTyZ8&list=PLJ8cMiYb3G5czofUrrizDiyC_yNLOe_CF&index=106.

Week 5* Political Violence

September 30

- No class: Statutory holiday (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation)

October 2



O'Neil, 212-229



Watch: The Women of FARC: Inside the Americas' Longest War.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZo8Zey1NA4>.

Week 6* Political Violence II

October 7



O'Neil, 230-242



Watch: Sudan's Conflict, Explained.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDfhxMwoyWo&t=5s>.

October 9



Brazys, Samuel, Indra de Soysa, and Krishna Chaitanya Vadlamannati. 2023. "Blessing or Curse? Assessing the Local Impacts of Foreign Direct Investment on Conflict in Africa." *Journal of Peace Research* (December).

Week 7 Midterm Exam

October 14

- No class: Statutory holiday (Thanksgiving Day)

October 16

- Midterm exam

Week 8 Political Economy

October 21






O'Neil, 100-121



Watch: Globalization: Winners and Losers in World Trade.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoZiTCz_wYA.

October 23

-  O’Neil, 122-136 [up to “Political-Economic Systems and the State: Comparing Outcomes”]
-  Watch: They Should Be Rich, But Their Economy is Stuck in a Rut.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIgxpbjfJPE>.
-  Watch: Two Economies, With One Set of Flaws: The Economies of Australia and Canada. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gu5lPuaZ9Jo>.

Week 9 Democratic Regimes

October 28



-  O’Neil, 138-162 [up to: “In Focus: Participation”]
-  Watch: How the Democratic Party Went from Lincoln to Trump.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8VOM8ET1WU>.

October 30



-  Harding, Robin. 2020. “Who Is Democracy Good For? Elections, Rural Bias, and Health and Education Outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa.” *Journal of Politics* 82(1): 241-254.

Week 10* Nondemocratic Regimes

November 4

-  O’Neil, 178-196 [up to: “Models of Nondemocratic Rule”]
-  Watch: How Iran’s Repression Machine Works.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=caUMtmxa5E8&t=344s>.

November 6

-  Lachapelle, Jean, Steven Levitsky, Lucan A. Way, and Adam E. Casey. 2020. “Social Revolution and Authoritarian Durability.” *World Politics* 72(4): 557–600. [Only read pages 557-575]
-  [If you do not have time to read the journal article, listen to this podcast instead and read the paper later: <https://newbooksnetwork.com/revolution-and-dictatorship>.]

Week 11 Midterm Break

November 11

- No class: Statutory holiday (Remembrance Day)

November 13

- No class: UBC midterm break

Week 12 Developed Democracies

November 18

-  O’Neil, 244-263 [up to: Societal Institutions: New Identities in Formation?]

November 20


-  Becher, Michael et al. 2024. "Government Performance and Democracy: Survey Experimental Evidence from 12 Countries during COVID-19." *Journal of Politics*.

Week 13* Developing Countries

November 25


-  O'Neil, 320-342 [up to: "Puzzles and Prospects for Democracy and Development"]

November 27

-  Lotito, Nicholas J., and Renanah M. Joyce. 2024. "In the Army We Trust: Public Confidence in Global South Militaries." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.


Week 14* Globalization and the Future of Comparative Politics

December 2

-  Lachapelle, Jean, Steven Levitsky, Lucan A. Way, and Adam E. Casey. 2020. "Social Revolution and Authoritarian Durability." *World Politics* 72(4): 557–600. [Only read pages 557-575]

-  Suggested podcast: <https://newbooksnetwork.com/revolution-and-dictatorship.>

December 4

-  O'Neil, 358-379 [up to: "Taking Stock of Globalization"]

Week 15 Final exam

Acknowledgement

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on in their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

General Academic Policies

Regular attendance in class meetings is expected. All assignments must be completed and handed in.

Read the university calendar so that you are aware of no-penalty drop dates, requirements for medical authorization (to defer an exam, for example) and other procedures that may affect you.

Students who wish to appeal grades assigned to their academic work may do so. The initial appeal should be made to the course instructor. If the student remains unsatisfied with this process, he/she may proceed to the head of the department or further to a formal committee established in accordance with University policies.

Religious holidays – UBC permits students who are scheduled to attend classes or write examinations on holy days of their religions to notify their instructor in advance of these days and their wish to observe them by absenting themselves from class or examination. Instructors provide opportunity for students to make up work or examinations missed without penalty. (Policy # 65.)

UBC is committed to the academic success of students with disabilities. UBC's policy on Academic Accommodations for students with disabilities aims to remove barriers and provide equal access to University services, ensure fair and consistent treatment of all students, and to create a welcoming environment. Students with a disability should first meet with an Access and Diversity advisor to determine what accommodations/services you are eligible for.

Academic Integrity and Responsibility

As a member of this class, you are responsible for contributing to the course objectives through your participation in class activities and your work on essays and other projects. In the process of coming into your own as an independent, responsible participant in the academic community, you are encouraged to seek advice, clarification, and guidance in your learning from your instructor. If you decide to seek help beyond the resources of this course, you are responsible for ensuring that this help does not lead you to submit others' work as your own. If an outside tutor or other person helps you, show this policy to your tutor or helper: make sure you both understand the limits of this person's permissible contribution. If you are uncertain, consult your instructor.

Academic communities depend on their members' honesty and integrity in representing the sources of reasoning, claims, and wordings that appear in their work. Like any other member of the academic community, you will be held responsible for the accurate representation of your sources: the means by which you produced the work you are submitting. If you are found to have misrepresented your sources and to have submitted others' work as your own, penalties may follow. Your case may be forwarded to the Head of the department, who may decide that you should receive zero for the assignment. The Head will report your case to the Dean's Office, where the report will remain on file. The Head may decide, in consultation with your instructor, that a greater penalty is called for, and will forward your case to the Dean's Office. After an interview in the Dean's Office, your case may be forwarded to the President's Advisory Committee on Academic Misconduct. Following a hearing in which you will be asked to account for your actions, the President may apply penalties including zero for the assignment; zero for the course; suspension from the university for a period ranging from 4 to 24 months; a notation on your permanent record. The penalty may be a combination of these.

Academic communities also depend on their members' living up to the commitments they make. By enrolling in this course, you make commitments to an academic community: you are responsible for meeting deadlines, and attending class and engaging in class activities. If you find that you cannot meet a deadline or cannot participate in a course activity, discuss your situation with your instructor before the deadline or before your absence.

Like any academic author submitting work for review and evaluation, you are guaranteeing that the work you submit for this course has not already been submitted for credit in another course. Your submitting work from another course, without your instructor's prior agreement, may result in penalties such as those applied to the misrepresentation of sources.

Use of Generative AI

If you make use of generative artificial intelligence tools, such as ChatGPT, to complete any project deliverables or other course-related work, the generated material must be clearly and correctly indicated, and cited/referenced.

Failure to clearly indicate and reference AI-generated material will be reported as academic misconduct.

COVID-19 Safety

If you are sick, it is important that you stay home. Complete a self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms here: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>. Meet with the teaching assistants once you feel better to catch up on class material.

If I (the instructor) am feeling ill: If I am unwell, I will not come to class. I will make every reasonable attempt to communicate plans for the class as soon as possible by email. If I am well enough to teach, but am taking precautions to avoid infecting others, we may hold

the class online. If this happens, you will receive an email informing you how to join the class.

Reach out and ask for help if you need it

University students often encounter setbacks from time to time that can impact academic performance. If you run into difficulties and need assistance, I encourage you to contact me by email. I will do my best to support your success during the term. This includes identifying concerns I may have about your academic progress or wellbeing through Early Alert. With Early Alert, faculty members can connect you with advisors who offer student's support and assistance getting back on track to success. Only specialized UBC advisors are able to access any concerns I may identify, and Early Alert does not affect your academic record.

For more information: <https://facultystaff.students.ubc.ca/systems-tools/early-alert>

For information about addressing mental or physical health concerns, including seeing a UBC counselor or doctor, visit: <https://students.ubc.ca/health-wellness>

Respectful University Environment

UBC recognizes that “the best possible environment for working, learning and living is one in which respect, civility, diversity, opportunity and inclusion are valued.” The full *UBC Statement on Respectful Environment for Students, Faculty and Staff* can be found at <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/respectful-environment/files/UBC-Statement-on-Respectful-Environment-2014.pdf>. Students should read this statement carefully and take note of both the protections and the responsibilities that it outlines for all members of the UBC community. Students should also review the Student Code of Conduct, at: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,750,0>

This course values frank discussion, healthy debate, and the free and respectful exchange of ideas. Students are welcome to voice and defend their views, which may differ from those of other students or of the instructor. However, disrespectful behavior, including bullying and harassment, will not be tolerated. The instructor will be professional and respectful in all their exchanges with students, and students will exercise similar professionalism and respect in their interactions with each other and with the instructor.

I expect us all to respect the preferred personal pronouns of all students. Using the right pronoun, like using someone's correct name, is a way to show respect. Please advise me of your pronoun preference early in the semester so I can respond as appropriate.

If you have any concerns about the class environment, please raise them with the instructor. You also have the options of contacting the Head of the Political Science Department, UBC's Equity and Inclusion Office (<http://equity.ubc.ca>), or the UBC Ombudsperson for Students: <https://ombudsoffice.ubc.ca>

Equity and Harassment

UBC is committed to equity (including but not limited to gender equity) and fostering a safe learning environment for everyone. All peoples should be able to study, work, and learn in a supportive environment that is free from sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination. UBC's Policy #3 on Discrimination and Harassment defines harassment as: "unwanted and unwelcome attention from a person who knows, or ought to know, that the behaviour is unwelcome. Harassment can range from written or spoken comments to unwanted jokes, gifts, and physical assault, and may be accompanied by threats or promises regarding work or study opportunities and conditions. Harassment can be either a single incident or a series of related incidents." Such behavior is not acceptable and will not be tolerated at UBC. If you or someone you know has encountered sexual violence or harassment, you can find confidential support and resources at the AMS Sexual Assault Support Centre, (SASC), and the Equity and Inclusion Office. The SASC is an all-genders service that serves the UBC-Vancouver campus community and is committed to creating a safer campus community, free from sexualized violence. Their work is informed by feminism, anti-oppression and recognition of intersectionality. The Equity and Inclusion Office is committed to fostering a community in which human rights are respected and equity and diversity are integral to university life.

Resources are available at:
Sexual Assault Support Centre, (SASC)
249M, Student Union Building, UBC
604-827-5180
sasc@ams.ubc.ca
<http://amssasc.ca>

Equity and Inclusion Office
2306 – 1874 East Mall (Brock Hall)
604.822.6353
equity@equity.ubc.ca
<http://equity.ubc.ca>